

## "None so Blind as Those That Will Not See"

Editorial in Chicago Tribune: In a celebrated and malodorous case a well known attorney, arising to address the supreme court, said:

"May it please the court, have things come to such a pass in the state of Illinois that to prove an act of this nature it is necessary for the act to be committed in the presence of the court?"

Inquiry might be made of the Dillingham committee of the United States senate: Have things come to such a pass that to prove the purchase of votes it is necessary to produce a bill of sale?

One of the resolutions adopted by the Dillingham committee was as follows:

"That there is no proof of the existence of any jackpot or other fund during the Forty-sixth general assembly of the state of Illinois in connection with the election of Senator Lorimer, other than the statement of White, Beckemeyer, Link, and Holstlaw that they were paid money after the election and none of them except White claimed, nor does it appear otherwise, to have received such money for voting for Senator Lorimer."

Adopted by a vote of five to three, as follows: Yeas, Senators Dillingham, Gamble, Jones, Johnston, and Fletcher. Nays, Kenyon, Kern, and Lea.

If this conclusion of the majority may be interpreted briefly it is this: "Only four members of the Illinois general assembly confessed that they had been paid after the election of William Lorimer, and proof is lacking because no bill of sale could be produced."

Corruption will not ask for any better protection than such a decision. It comes to this: Unless a vote seller opens a store and displays his wares on the counter with prices plainly marked on the votes he has to offer, unless he appears in the market place with what he has to sell, unless he dickers and bargains with the bribe giver, unless a contract be entered into between the two, and unless a bill of sale accompanies the transaction, unless these formalities be observed the confes-

sion of the bribe taker is not evidence that a bribe was given.

Whatever might seem absurd in this interpretation disappears when the resolution of Senator Jones, adopted by the majority, is read. "There is no proof of the existence of a jackpot or other fund \* \* \* other than the statements of White, Beckemeyer, Link, and Holstlaw that they were paid money after the election and none of them except White claimed, nor does it appear otherwise, to have received such money for voting for Senator Lorimer."

In other words, contracts entered into between White and Browne, Beckemeyer and Browne, and Holstlaw and Broderick could not be produced and no bill of sale was offered the committee to substantiate the statement of these men that they had been paid for the votes they had cast.

White said he had a bargain with Browne. Beckemeyer said he did not have to be told in specific terms. Holstlaw said he was told he would get \$2,500.

White demanded his money after the election and was paid it. Beckemeyer was handed his with the comment, "There's your Lorimer money." Link was given \$1,000, and said he thought it was a "reward." Holstlaw was summoned to Chicago by Broderick and was paid \$2,500 in Broderick's saloon.

But the committee says this does not prove anything. Where's the bill of sale? Where's the contract? Show us that these men entered into an agreement in writing that Browne, hereafter known as the party of the first part, agreed to pay Beckemeyer, hereafter known as the party of the second part, the sum of \$1,000 in consideration, etc. And if such a contract could be produced it probably would be objected to and probably thrown out on the ground that it was not properly attested.

"Nor does it appear otherwise." Thus all the evidence which shows that Holstlaw, for instance, was summoned to Chicago by Broderick, that he deposited the money given him by Broderick, in the State Bank of Chicago, that he was summoned to Chicago again by Broderick and was paid another sum of money—plainly proving that the first payment was not from the general corruption fund but from the fund used for Lorimer—that he deposited this money in the State Bank of Chicago—all this, deposit slips, letters, telegrams, and confession, the committee sweeps aside and demands a bill of sale.

It was not proved that Holstlaw and Broderick sat down as might two men, one with a load of potatoes to sell and the other a commission merchant, dickered over the price of potatoes, reached an agreement, and concluded their transaction with a bill of sale.

Obviously if this perfect chain of evidence in the Holstlaw case amounted to nothing without a contract or without a bill of sale it would be useless to expect the majority of the committee to credit the mere word of Beckemeyer that he knew he would get money, that he expected it, and that he got it. It would be useless to expect that the majority of the committee would pay any attention to evidence which showed legislators growing suddenly wealthy, hiding money in Bibles and tin boxes, buying farms and town property, displaying bank notes with bravado, etc.

A bill of sale must be produced. Legislative corruption will ask for no better protection than this—if the criminal courts can be persuaded to

accept the theory of the majority of the Dillingham committee.

The conclusion reached by the committee in this particular not only went further than that reached by the first investigating committee but it was based on evidence which the first committee did not have. The Holstlaw evidence was more complete. The relations between Holstlaw and Broderick were established by documents which the first committee did not have. Holstlaw made his testimony conclusive. He was told he would get money. He expected to get it. He got it.

The Dillingham committee was given such evidence as that involving William C. Blair, evidence complete and corroborated. New testimony concerning new names and new transactions was produced. A new record essentially different and more conclusive in its proof or corruption was made. The Blair evidence was new. The Funk evidence was

new. Every charge was supported by new testimony.

But the senate will be asked to uphold the res adjudicata resolution, also adopted by a vote of five to three in committee, on the ground that the new evidence, failing to submit bills of sale, was not new evidence.

The senate will be asked to say with the majority of the Dillingham committee: Until some contracts can be produced, until bills of sale can be shown, or until the crime of bribery is committed in the presence of an investigating committee or before a court, "nothing has been developed that justifies a reversal of the solemn and deliberate judgment of the United States senate."

Let this, however, be clearly understood: Should this iniquity prevail, the people of the United States will be more credulous than the senators. They will not ask to see the bill of sale.

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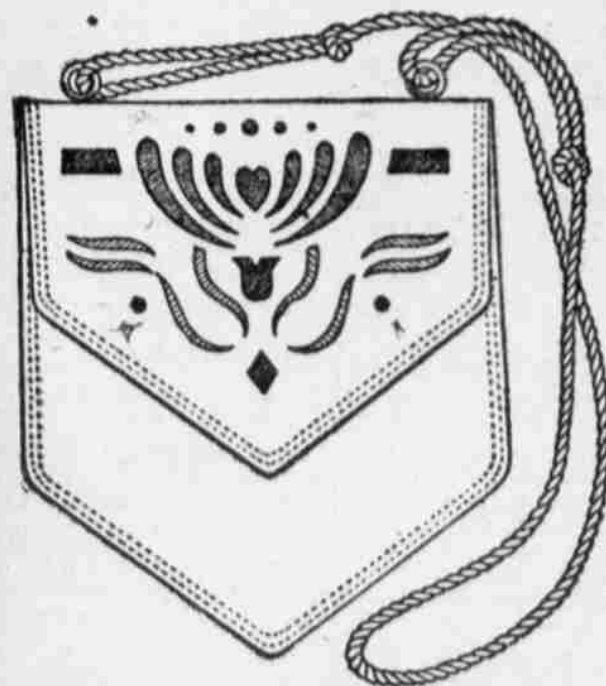
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